

# **PIERSON BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

NOTE: The Scriptural references used in this constitution are based on the King James Version of the Bible. This does not mean we solely use the KJV in ministry.

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

This organization shall be known as "Pierson Bible Church" of Pierson, Michigan 49339.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

### **Section A: STATEMENT**

To be Ambassadors of Jesus Christ by bringing the Gospel of Jesus to the ends of the earth beginning in our own town; in order to Win people to Jesus Christ, Establish them in the faith, and Perfect them for the work of the Ministry to the Glory of God.

### **Section B: INDEPENDENCE & AUTONOMY**

Pierson Bible Church shall remain an independent and autonomous organization. Keeping with New Testament example and teaching, it shall forever remain free from denominationalism.

### **Section C: AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLE II**

The provisions of Article II shall be amended only by unanimous consent of the membership.

## **ARTICLE III: FELLOWSHIP & AFFILIATION**

### **Section A:**

Fellowship with other local, national, or international ministries and independent churches shall be maintained provided such cooperation does not jeopardize the undenominational and fundamental position of Pierson Bible Church. Pierson Bible Church shall remain free from cooperation with associations that are in disagreement with the doctrines, denominations or of this autonomous and independent organization and those in disagreement with the doctrines of the I.F.C.A. International whom are used to compliment the standing of this fellowship of believers.

### **Section B: AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLE III**

The provisions of Article III shall be amended only by unanimous consent of the membership.

## **ARTICLE IV: STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE**

### **Section A: THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

We believe the (1) The Holy Bible was given by the inspiration of God. II Tim. 3:16,17; (2) Written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 2:13, II Peter 1:21); (3) Therefore, free from all error. (Ps 19: 7-9; Matt. 5:18, Ps 119:89); (4) In the sense that the Holy Spirit gave very words of the Sacred Writings to the holy men of old, and that this Divine inspiration is not in different degrees, but extends equally and fully to all parts of the Writings found in the original manuscripts. (Acts 1:16; 28:25; II Peter 3:2).

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## **Section B: THE GODHEAD**

We believe that the Godhead (1) Eternally exists in three persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (II Cor. 13:14; John 15:26); (2) And that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, perfection's, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience. (I Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4: 4-6; Matt 28:19).

## **Section C: THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST**

We believe that (1) The Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (John 1:1,2,14; Luke 1:35; (2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical, resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 3: 24, 25; I Peter 2: 24; Eph. 1: 7; I Peter 1:3-5; (3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where as our High Priest He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1: 9, 10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8: 34; I John 2:1, 2).

## **Section D: THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe that the Holy Spirit (1) Is a Divine person. (Acts 5:3, 4); (2) Equal with God the Father, and God the Son, and of the same nature. (Matt. 28:19); (3) That He was active in the creation. (Gen.1:1-3); (4) That in relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment, and of righteousness, (II Thes. 2:7; John 16:8-11); (5) That He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony. (John 3:5, 6); That He is the agent in the New Birth: that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer. (II Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13; I Cor. 12:13; Luke 24:47; John 16:13; Rom. 15:16; Rom. 8:26, 27); (7) We believe in the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-24).

## **Section E: THE MINISTRY AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

We believe that (1) God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established. (I Cor. 12:4-11; II Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; (2) We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted. (John 15:7; I John 5:14, 15).

## **Section F: SANCTIFICATION**

We believe that (1) Sanctification has a two-fold meaning: (a) We believe that in the Old Testament it was the setting apart of things, days, and persons, specifically for God, (b) The believer at the time of regeneration is so set apart by God the Father. (Ex. 12:14; Joel 1:14; Heb. 10:10-14; (2) We believe that the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God, experiences the power of the in-dwelling Christ for holiness of life and victory over the old nature, which work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence. (Col 1:26-28; I Thes. 5:23).

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## **Section G: THE TWO NATURES OF THE BELIEVER**

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the in-dwelling Holy Spirit; and that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural. (Col. 3:10, I Peter 1:4-16; I John 3:5-9).

## **Section H: SEPARATION**

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God. (II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1,2; 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9:11; II Cor. 6:14-17).

## **Section I: THE DEVIL OR SATAN**

We believe that (1) Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell. (Isa. 14:12-17; Eze. 28:11-19). (2) Drew after him a host of angels. (Rev. 12:9); (3) That he is now the malignant prince and the power of the air and the unholy god of this world. (Eph. 2:2; (4) We hold him to be man's great tempter. (I Thes. 3:5); (5) The enemy of God and Jesus Christ. (I John 3:8); (6) The accuser of the saints. (Rev. 12:10); (7) The author of all false religions; the chief power back of the apostasy. (II Cor. 11:13-15); (8) The lord of the antichrist. (Rev. 13:2; (9) The author of all power of darkness. (Rev. 13:13,14); (10) However destined to final defeat at the hands of God's Son, and to the judgment of all eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. (Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41).

## **Section J: CREATION**

We believe in the Genesis account creation, and that (1) It is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively. (Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16; Heb.11:3); (2) That man was created directly in God's own image, and after His own likeness. (Gen. 1:26, 27); (3) That man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species or development through interminable periods of time from the lower to the higher forms. (Gen 2:7, 21-23); (4) That all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind". (Gen. 1:11, 24).

## **Section K: THE FALL OF MAN**

We believe that (1) Although man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state. (Gen. 3:1-6); (2) Lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1-3); (3) Therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Rom. 1:20-32; (4) In consequences of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but by choice. (Rom. 5:12-19).

## **Section L: THE VIRGIN BIRTH**

We believe that (1) Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner (Matt. 1:18,20); (2) Born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born, or can ever be born of woman. (Luke 1:27,37); (3) That He is both the Son of God and God the Son (I John 5:20).

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## **Section M: THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN**

We believe that (1) Our redemption (justification) has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28); (2) Who was made to be sin, and made a curse for us, dying in our stead (II Cor. 5:21, Gal. 3:13; Rom 5:6,9); (3) That no repentance, no feelings, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the days of the apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood, or to the merit of that finished work, wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper Divinity with perfect and sinless humanity. (I Peter 1:18,19; Eph. 2:8-10); (4) Therefore, the blessings of this redemption (justifications) are made free to all by the gospel. (Rom. 10:13; Rev. 22:17); (5) That nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (John 3:15,16; 5:40).

## **Section N: GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION**

We believe that (1) In order to be saved, sinners must be born again. (John 3:3, 7); (2) That the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus. (II Cor. 5:17); (3) That it is instantaneous and not a process. (I John 5:1); (4) That in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sin is made a partaker of the Divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God. (Rom. 6:23; II Peter 1:4); (5) That the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, not by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with the Divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel. (John 3:8; 1:12, 13); (6) That its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life (Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 5:9).

## **Section O: REPENTANCE AND FAITH**

We believe that (1) Repentance and faith are solemn obligations. (Acts 2:20); (2) Also inseparable graces. (Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21); (3) Wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God. (John 6:63); (4) Thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy. (Luke 18:13; II Cor. 7:10; II Peter 3:9); (5) At the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior. (Luke 12:8; Rom. 10:9, 10).

## **Section P: THE CHURCH**

We believe that (1) The church is a spiritual organism composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God. (Matt. 16: 16-18; Eph. 2: 19-22); (2) That by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body whether we be Jews or Gentiles. (Rom. 12: 5; I Cor. 12: 12-27); (3) Thus being members of one another we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, loving one another with a pure heart fervently. (Eph. 4: 3-10; Col. 3: 14, 15); (4) As a local assembly rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry having only three offices: that of Pastor, Elders, and Deacons (as detailed in the Word of God), and having only two ordinances, namely: water baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Phil. 1: 1; Gal. 1: 2; Eph. 4: 11, 12; I Tim. 3: 1-13; Titus 1: 5-9).

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## **Section Q: CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe that (1) Civil government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society. (Rom. 13: 1-7); (2) That magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed. (I Tim. 2: 1-3; Titus 3: 1, 2); (3) Except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 5: 29); (4) Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth. (Matt. 10: 28; Phil 2. 10, 11).

## **Section R: THE ETERNAL SECURITY AND ASSURANCE OF BELIEVERS**

We believe that (1) All the redeemed, once saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6: 37-40; 10: 27-30; Rom. 8: 1, 38, 39; I Cor. 1: 4-8; I Peter 1: 50); (2) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Rom 13: 13, 14; Gal. 5: 13, Titus 2: 11-15).

## **Section S: THE RESURRECTION, RETURN OF CHRIST, AND RELATED EVENTS**

We believe in (1) The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt. 28: 6,7; I Cor. 15: 4); (2) That He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God". (Acts 1: 9-11; Mark 16: 19); (3) That He alone is our "merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God". (I Tim 2: 5; Heb. 5: 9, 10; 2: 17, 7: 25-28; Rom. 8: 34); (4) We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation but is fast ripening for judgment, while there will be a fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body. (Luke 17: 26-31; II Tim. 3: 1-5, 13); (5) Henceforth that the Lord Jesus will come in the air to catch away the church, His bride, and that this pre-tribulation, pre-millennial coming is the blessed hope set before us in the gospel, for which we should be constantly looking. (I Thes. 4: 13-18; 5: 9; II Thes. 2: 1-3); (6) At the end of the tribulation, the Lord Jesus will come in personal power and glory to introduce the Millennial Age when Israel shall be restored to their own land and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord". (Heb.2: 14; Rev. 19: 11, 20: 6; Matt. 24: 29-31; Eze. 39: 25-29).

NOTE: We have not listed every doctrine that we believe. Some doctrines have been combined with others, rather than listing them separately. For doctrines not listed, consult our pastor, board, and the Statement of Doctrine of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America.

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## ARTICLE V:

### **Pierson Bible Church Statement on Biblical vs. Same-Sex Marriage and Sexuality**

(Added to the constitution 10-25-2015)

The members Pierson Bible Church and churches of the IFCA International maintain their historical commitment to God's Word, the Bible as the final and supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice. Morality is a matter of biblical definition, not subject to any cultural, social or political redefinition. Morality, when left to popular opinion, will drift from generation to generation, but biblical truth remains constant and absolute. (Jn. 17:17; Pro. 30:5-6; Ps. 119:89)

The Biblical teaching on issues of human sexuality and marriage is the final word regardless of what any human individual or human institutions, organizations or groups might contend. There is no authority that can supersede, countermand or preclude the teaching of the Word of God.

We affirm biblical, traditional and historical marriage as the uniting of one man and one woman (as genetically defined) within covenant bonds and lifelong commitment. Marriage is not open to social architecture, cultural engineering or judicial activism. God established it as His purpose at the beginning of time with Adam and Eve, demonstrated it through the rest of Scripture and reinforced it through the teachings of Jesus. (Gen 2:18, 21-24; Mat 19:3-6; Eph. 5:31) God regards any sexual activity outside of this biblical definition of marriage as sinful and, therefore, so must we. (Lev. 20:10-21; Rom 1:18-22; 1Cor. 6:15-20)

We, the members and ministers of Pierson Bible Church cannot and will not recognize or endorse same-sex "marriages," or be involved in solemnizing such "unions" either by hosting them within our churches or officiating at such ceremonies.

Any position, perspective or redefinition of marriage and sexuality that disagrees with this biblical standard, regardless of its origin or source, will be dissented and rejected.

The Bible also informs us how we are to respond to people who struggle with sin of any kind, including homosexuality. We are to possess and demonstrate God's love for sinners, a love that seeks to deliver them from their sin through the provision of Jesus Christ. (Mat. 5:13-16; 1Pet. 2:11-12) We renounce common reactions such as sarcasm, mockery, ridicule, and disrespect to those engaged in sin. However, the Gospel is not, nor has it ever been, about affirming humanity in whatever expression it chooses. It is rather about the powerful grace of God toward sinners that delivers us from sin by cleansing us through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. (1Jn. 1:7-9; 1Jn. 2:2; Rom. 10:9-13) It is impossible, therefore, to demonstrate the love of God, and at the same time, endorse, legitimize or affirm conduct or behavior that brings His condemnation on its participants. (Eph. 5:3-11; 6:12-13)

Because we believe that the fundamental and inalienable right to religious freedom is at stake within this critical issue, we will remain loyal to God and His eternal Word regardless of the decision of any human court, regardless of how supremely men venerate it. God's expressed Word and will must remain truly supreme.

Therefore, the members of Pierson Bible Church and its ministers agree to remain submissive to God rather than men; to openly reject any legal redefinition of marriage; to continue to contend for the faith; and, to affirm God's design for marriage, family and individual conduct.

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## ARTICLE VI: ORDINANCES

We recognize two ordinances of the church for this age: The Lord's Supper and Water Baptism. They are not to be regarded, however, as a means of salvation, nor as means of salvation, nor as means of grace by which special merit is obtained.

### **Section A: THE LORD'S SUPPER**

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, "who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," that the ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His Coming and preceded by self-examination. It is to be observed at least once each quarter and on special occasions such as Christmas Eve, etc. (I Cor. 11: 20-23; Rom. 8: 32).

### **Section B: WATER BAPTISM**

When administered by this church, baptism shall be by immersion, at the request of those who have personally acknowledged Christ as Savior. This ordinance shall not be a requirement for membership in this church. (Acts 8: 36-39; 10: 47, 48; I Cor. 1: 14-17).

## ARTICLE VII: MEMBERSHIP

(Various changes in this section relating to elder and deacon boards on 10-22-2017)

### **Section A: RECEPTION OF MEMBERS**

Persons desiring to unite with this church, upon confession of their faith, shall be examined by the Elder Board as to their Christian experience and the basis of their salvation; likewise, those with letters of recommendation from sister churches shall present them in person to the Elder Board.

Applicants whose examination is satisfactory will be recommended to the Church for membership by the Elder Board; and when approved by the Church at a congregational meeting, will be notified by the Elder Board when to appear to be received into fellowship. If applicant fails to appear after the third successive notice, his application shall be canceled. All applicants will be required to assent to the foregoing articles of faith and sign the Constitution of the Church.

### **Section B: DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

1. Regular attendance of the services of God's house, water baptism, the Lord's Supper, the daily, systematic reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ, shall be urged upon our members.
2. We also assert our conviction that proportionate giving is a distinct and positive command in the Scriptures and pledge ourselves to a systematic contribution for the support of the Church, of such portion of our income laid down in the Bible. (Mal. 3: 8-11; I Cor. 16: 2; II Cor. 9).

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3. We shall require of each other daily walk and conversation, loyal obedience to all those moral precepts laid down in the Word of God so plainly as not to need definition.

### **Section C: STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP**

The church clerk will keep track of membership status per this section, and will present names to the Elder Board for their decision as to actual changes in status of membership.

The Membership of this Church shall consist of three groups, namely, Active Membership, Associate Membership, and Inactive Membership.

1. Active Membership shall consist of such Christians as have been received in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and who are not members of any other church. a. Active Members who have reached the age of 18 years shall be entitled to vote. b. No minimum age shall be set for membership. The fitness of each applicant who is under voting age shall be determined by the Pastor and the Elder Board.

2. Associate Membership shall be extended to those who meet the qualifications of Active Membership, but who are not permanent residents of this area; such as students and missionaries, who may hold regular membership elsewhere. They shall be permitted to teach a Sunday School class or participate in a similar ministry. They shall have the right to attend the business meetings of the church, but shall not have the right to vote.

3. Inactive Membership shall consist of the following:

a. Those who no longer have residence in this area, but still desire to hold their membership in this church.

b. Those who have been absent from the services of the church for a period of 6 months without giving a satisfactory reason for such absence.

c. Those who have come under some disciplinary action of the church. Inactive members shall not have the right to vote or hold an office in the church.

### **Section D: DISCIPLINE**

Matters of known offense will be discussed by the Pastor and Elder Board to determine if actual church discipline is in order. If so, it will be handled in the following manner:

Matthew 18: 15-17 states that there are some offenses that should be handled between brothers and sisters in Christ alone. If for some reason the offense cannot be resolved in this manner, it is to be brought to the church body (v.17).

Note: Section 1, 2 and 3 below are at the sole discretion of the pastor and the Elder Board and not the church clerk.

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1. THE OFFENDER- If willing, will come before the church body in repentance and ask for its forgiveness. If the offender is unwilling to do so, they will at that time be removed from church membership (Matt. 18: 17).

2. THE ELDER BOARD - after the repentance of, and sought forgiveness by the offender, will set up a discipleship plan which will endeavor to restore the offender (Gal 6: 1). The offender will be removed from all ministries during this discipleship process until the Elder Board decides that Biblical restoration has taken place.

3. THE CHURCH BODY - plays a vital role in the restoration process. The church body should forgive the offender, pray for them regularly, bear with them in love, encourage them to live for God's glory, include them in fellowships, and help them in any way they can. (Gal. 6: 2; Eph. 4: 32; Col. 3: 12-17; Phil. 2: 1-4). Once Biblical restoration has taken place, the offender will be viewed by the Pastor, Elder Board, and church body as God views a sinner covered by the blood of Jesus Christ; who at that time is no longer an offender (I John 1: 9; Ps. 103: 12).

Note: Items 4 and 5 below are handled by the church clerk, under the review and direction of the Elder Board.

4. ERASING FROM ROLL - The name of any member who shall be absent from the service of the church for a period of twelve (12) months without giving satisfactory reason for such absence may be erased from the roll of membership. Attempts shall be made by the Elder Board to contact them. Members leaving the city for a time, desiring their membership retained, should keep the church informed of whereabouts through correspondence with the church clerk. The names of persons uniting with another church, without a letter from this church, may be erased from the roll by vote of the Elder Board, at its discretion. The names of persons who have left this church to work in another, where regular church membership is not practiced, may be erased from the roll by vote of the Elder Board, at its discretion.

5. LETTERS OF TRANSFER - The customary usage of interchange of letters with orthodox churches will be observed and letters granted to those in good and regular standing. Application for dismissal from this church and recommendation for membership in sister churches should be made by letter addressed to the church clerk, being careful to state the name of the church with which it is desired to affiliate. Experience teaches that granting letters on the request of someone other than those to whom letters are to be granted will still remain on our records until, and only until, satisfactory evidence is received that these names have been transferred to the record of another church.

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## **ARTICLE VIII: CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

(Various changes in this section relating to elder and deacon boards on 10-22-2017)

### **Section A: AUTHORITY**

The government is vested in the body of believers who are active members of this church.

### **Section B: MEETINGS**

1. The church may be called together for the transaction of any legitimate business by a majority of the Elder or Deacon Boards, or by the pastor, or by any six (6) members. Notice of such meeting having been given at church meeting for two (2) Sundays preceding the day appointed.

2. Quarterly congressional meetings shall be held on a date decided upon by the Deacon Board.

3. The annual meeting of the church shall be held in January of each year. At this meeting shall occur the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, annual report, the election of Elders and Deacons, and other necessary business. The church clerk shall keep all the minutes, and the meeting shall be governed by parliamentary rules. The voting shall be restricted to members of eighteen (18) years and over.

4. A quorum at the annual meeting or special meetings of the membership shall be twenty-five (25) percent of all voting members. When less than fifty (50) percent are present, a two-thirds majority shall be required to pass any measure, except the call of a pastor.

5. The pastor or appointed deacon, shall preside at the annual meeting, quarterly meetings, and all special business meetings. In the event of the absence of the pastor, the chairman of these meetings shall be appointed by the deacon board.

6. The deacon board shall arrange the details of all church meetings and see that all possible preparations for their successful conduct is made.

7. At least one nomination shall be made for each office of elders and deacons by the board and they shall present them to the church at least two (2) weeks before the annual meeting. Suggestions can be made for each office of elders and deacons by the congregation at the annual meeting. Nominees must meet the requirements for each office.

8. All associate deacon positions will require a majority of the voting membership in attendance at said meeting. The associate term will be for two (2) years and each qualified may can serve in the associate position only once. The associate deacon may have input at the deacon meetings, but will not have any voting privileges. (Effective January 23, 2000 + changes 10-22-2017)

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9. The voting members of the church shall elect all officers by ballot, and a majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect. The percentage of vote required to elect a qualified man to the office of Elder or Deacon at Pierson Bible Church must be 75% or greater of the voting membership in attendance at said meeting. All terms will be six (6) years. (Effective January 23, 2000 + changes 10-22-2017)

10. All other powers, such as examination of candidates for membership, discipline, appropriation of all monies, and supervision of sub organizations, shall be vested in a Board consisting of the incumbents of the following office and the newly elected: The Pastor, not less than two deacons and two elders. The terms of elders and deacons shall be for six (6) years, and their election shall be so arranged by the nominating committee that all shall not terminate at the same time. In case of the death, resignation, or dismissal of one of the members of the Board, a temporary member shall be appointed by the Board to serve until the next Annual Meeting. At this time, his term shall expire.

## **Section C: THE CHURCH BOARD**

### **1. The Pastor**

#### **a. Qualifications**

1.) The Pastor shall be a man who gives evidence of the call of God to the ministry of the gospel and of adherence to the Scriptural principles governing church leadership. He shall be recognized as the God appointed leader of the congregation

2.) Any man to be considered for the pastorate shall have read this Constitution and shall have signified in writing his unreserved agreement with its provisions and with the undenominational position of this Church.

#### **b. Call**

1.) The Elder Board shall appoint a Pulpit Committee to investigate possible candidates and arrange for them to speak at Sunday service. Investigation of a candidate shall include a questionnaire regarding training, pastoral experience, and qualifications mentioned in section (a) above. A visit by members of the Elders and Deacon Boards to his present pastorate is advisable where possible.

2.) When a qualified candidate has spoken at two Sunday services, his name may be presented by the Elder Board for a vote at a regularly called congregational meeting. A Three-quarters majority vote shall be required to extend a call. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.

#### **c. Duties**

The pastor, by virtue of his office as spiritual leader and shepherd of the flock, becomes a member of this church, and his duties shall be those generally associated with his office, including the ministry of the Word, administration of the ordinances, and the care of the spiritual welfare of the members. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and organization of the Church (I Tim. 4: 12-16)

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## d. Termination

- 1.) The Pastor's term of office shall be indefinite. A notice of 60 days shall be given to terminate, with remuneration and services continuing through this period, unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- 2.) A vote may be taken by the membership at any time to terminate the Pastor's services subject to the following:
  - a. A special meeting may be called for that purpose in accord with Article VII-Section B.
  - b. It shall be placed on the agenda of a regular meeting, provided that previous action has been taken by the Elder Board or a petition of twenty-five percent of the membership has been presented to the Elder Board.
  - c. A two-thirds majority shall be required to terminate the Pastor's services.
- 3.) In the event of doctrinal or moral defection, the Pastor's services may be terminated by the action of the Elder Board, to be ratified by a vote of membership within 30 days.

## **2. Elders**

There shall be an indefinite number of Elders, not less than two in addition to the Pastor, who shall be in actual service. They shall be elected for a six-year term, shall assist in the administration of the Lord's Supper, and such other offices as the Word of God assigns. In the absence of an Elder Board, the Deacon Board shall assume all duties of the Elder Board.

## **3. Deacons**

There shall be an indefinite number of deacons, not less than two, elected for six-years each, and entrusted with such responsibilities as the Word of God assigns.

## **4. Associate Deacons**

The Board may appoint men to attend Board meetings to obtain experience. They may voice their opinions but they are not entitled to vote in Board decisions. Associate deacons can be experience men, who because of life events are not qualified to fully hold the office of deacon. Associate deacons can also be men chosen by the board to gain experience and develop leadership skills.

Associate deacons can be asked to assist the board in all areas such as the Lord's Supper; Ministries Chairman; Worship Chairman; Fellowship Chairman; Building & Equipment Chairman; The Missions Representative to the board; Financial Secretary (Asst. Treasurer); and similar positions. The Associate deacon cannot hold these offices: President; Vice President; or Financial Chairman (Treasurer).

The Associate deacon will attend board meetings as deemed appropriate by the pastor or board chairman (probably attend most meetings, but there will be times when only the voting

## PIERSON BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

board and pastor may meet for certain issues). When the Associate attends board meetings, he will give input but have not voting privilege.

The term will be for two (2) years. The Associate will be voted in by a majority vote of the voting members in attendance at said meeting. (Effective January 18, 2004)

### **5. Officers of the Deacon Board**

#### **a. President**

The President shall perform such duties as usually pertains to that office.

#### **b. Vice-President**

The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in his absence.

#### **c. Board Clerk**

The Clerk shall keep a record of all business transactions at the congregational and Board meetings, keep an accurate record of the membership and carry on all necessary correspondence. (These duties were transferred to the 'non-board clerk').

The board clerk shall maintain the boards own minutes.

### **Non-Board positions open to the membership:**

#### **1. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall hold and disburse church funds at the direction of the Board. This person shall make a monthly report to the Board and quarterly report to the congregation. This person shall submit the books for an annual audit in such a manner as may be directed by the Board. This person will be appointed by, and is answerable to the board.

#### **2. Assistant Treasurer**

The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer. This person will be appointed by, and is answerable to the board.

Qualifications for the treasurer or assistant treasurer office must be an individual whom is a church member who attends church services on a regular basis. A member in good standing with the church body, a member above reproach. (This amendment (January 20, 2019) shall supersede the former Constitution in that this position does not require the treasurer or assistant to be a Board member)

#### **3. Church Clerk**

It will be acceptable to have a church clerk that is not a member of the board. This position is listed in the constitution as the 'non-board clerk' to clarify whom we are discussing.

The church clerk shall be appointed by the Deacon Board. The term shall be for a period of six (6) years. The individual shall be answerable to the board president.

Qualifications for this office are to be an individual who is an active member attending church services regularly.

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Duties: (Also clarified in the appropriate sections): Under article VII – Church Government, section B – meetings: This clerk shall keep all minutes of meetings, and will present the last meetings minutes at the next meeting. This church clerk position shall not set the agenda for meetings, that will be up to the pastor or deacon board. (On August 2, 2015 at the business meeting, the 'Church Clerk' (or 'Non-Board Clerk') position was formed)

### 4) Sunday School Superintendent

The Superintendent shall be elected by a two-thirds majority at the annual meeting. The term shall be for a period of six (6) years. The individual elected to this position shall be answerable in all matters specifically to the Elder Board, which shall oversee all Christian Education matters at Pierson Bible Church.

Qualifications for this office must be an individual whom is a church member who attends church services on a regular basis. A member in good standing with the church body, a member above reproach, and an individual with a heart's desire to see children come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(This amendment (January 17, 1999) shall supersede the former Constitution in that this position does not require the Sunday school superintendent be a Board member + changes 10-22-2017) (Moved to this location in the constitution from 'membership' January 27-2019)

## ARTICLE IX: FINANCES

### Section A: HOW SUPPORTED

The finance program of this church and its sub-organizations shall be supported only through the free-will offerings of Christians, and unsolicited gifts of those interested in its ministry.

### Section B: TRANSACTIONS

Any transactions over \$1,500.00 must have congregational approval.  
(\$1,500 approved 10-22-2017)

In cases of emergency, it is understood that the board may authorize expenses above the \$1,500.00 limit, but must call a congregational meeting within 3 weeks after the decision to thoroughly inform the membership of the reasoning behind the decision and any actions taken.  
(Effective October 25, 2015)

### Section C: DESIGNATED FUNDS

Gifts designated through the church for a specific purpose or person shall be so used, unless the donor approves a change. Otherwise the gift shall be returned.

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## **ARTICLE X: PROPERTIES**

### **Section A: TITLES**

The right to any property that may be acquired by this church shall be and remain vested in that body of believers who shall remain faithful to the standards of faith and doctrine contained in this Constitution as adopted.

### **Section B: USE OF PROPERTY**

All properties belonging to the Church shall be available to the membership for purposes consistent with the ministry of the Church, subject to regulation by the Deacon Board.

### **Section C: DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution, all assets, real and personal, shall be distributed to the Rural Bible Mission, 32 Kalamazoo Ave., Grand Rapids, Michigan. If at the time of termination, the Rural Bible Mission is not in existence, or no longer qualified under Section 501. c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code or unable to accept the assets, the distribution will be made to the Independent Bible Mission of Michigan, Comstock Park, Michigan, or to such organizations as are qualified as tax exempt under Section 501.c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provisions of future U>S. Internal Revenue Law.

## **ARTICLE XI: ORDINATION**

(Various changes in this section relating to elder and deacon boards on 10-22-2017)

### **Section A: COMPOSITION & FUNCTION OF COUNCIL OF ORDINATION**

1. When in the judgment of the Elder Board, a man in this membership or in special cases, a non-member, is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of said Elder Board to call and conduct a Council of ordination after the approval of the Church has been obtained by vote. This council shall consist of ordained ministers, and, if possible, one delegate from each fundamental church invited to participate.
2. The Council of Ordination shall thoroughly examine the applicant regarding his personal Christian experience, call to the ministry, educational training, doctrinal belief, reputation, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. The applicant shall give evidence of his agreement with those provisions of the constitution of this Church with respect to doctrine, independence of the local church, and Scriptural qualifications for church leadership.
3. Upon completion of the examination of the applicant, a two-thirds majority vote by the council of Ordination shall be required to recommend his ordination to the Church. When so recommended, a public ordination service shall be arranged by the Council of Ordination in consultation with the Pastor or other representative of the Church, and the applicant.
4. The minutes of the Council of Ordination and of the public service shall be incorporated into the record of Church meetings, and a Certificate of Ordination shall be provided for the newly ordained minister.

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## **Section B: DISCIPLINE OF ORDAINED MINISTERS**

1. The Elder Board shall have the power to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination credentials of any minister ordained under this Constitution, if said minister is found guilty of doctrinal or moral defection after impartial trial conducted in the Spirit of I Cor. 13.
2. The minister under discipline shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the membership within 60 days after the decision of the Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS**

### **Section A: PROCEDURE**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present, with exception of Articles II and III, at a regularly called meeting, provided that such amendment is presented in written form at least one month previous to the meeting, and by public announcement as provided in Article VII, Section B.

### **Section B: LIMITATIONS**

Amendments of Articles II and III shall require unanimous consent of the active membership.

### **Section C: Changes**

Changes are noted in the sections they apply to, along with the date of change.